

FIGURE 9.3 Flowchart for Evaluating Your Thesis Statement, Topic Sentences, and Evidence

QUESTIONS

REVISION STRATEGIES

1. Does your essay have a thesis that identifies your topic and position and suggests your slant? (To find out, state your thesis; then highlight the sentence in your draft that comes closest to what you just said. If you cannot find such a sentence, you probably do not have a well-focused thesis).

NO

- Reread your essay and answer this question: What is the essay's one main point?
- Write a thesis statement that expresses that main point.
- Revise your paper to focus on that main point.
- Delete parts of the essay that do not support your thesis statement.

YES

2. Do your readers have the background they need to understand your thesis? (To find out, ask someone unfamiliar with your topic to read your essay, and get feedback.)

NO

- Answer *who, what, when, where, why,* and *how* questions to discover more background information.

YES

3. Have you presented enough evidence to support your thesis? (Place a ✓ beside the evidence that supports your thesis. For paragraphs with few ✓s, ask yourself: Do they need more evidence to be convincing?)

NO

- Use prewriting strategies or do additional research to discover more supporting evidence.
- Evaluate this new evidence and add the most convincing evidence to your essay.

YES

4. Does each topic sentence logically connect to and support the thesis? Read the thesis, and then read each topic sentence. Revise when the connection is not obvious.

NO

- Rewrite the topic sentence so that it clearly supports the thesis.
- If necessary, broaden your thesis so that it encompasses all your supporting points.

YES

5. Is your evidence specific and detailed? Reread paragraphs where you placed ✓s. Does each item answer one of these questions: *Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?* For paragraphs with few or no ✓s, add more detailed evidence.

NO

- Answer *who, what, when, where, why,* and *how* questions to discover more detailed evidence. Name names, give dates, specify places.
- Use action verbs and descriptive language, including carefully chosen adjectives and adverbs.